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## LANGUAGE EXTINCTION: COMPARATIVE STUDY ON EXTINCTION AND ENDANGERMENT OF ROMANI AND THE IRISH LANGUAGE, AND THE METHODS OF LANGUAGE REVIVAL AND PRESERVATION

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### **Abstract:**

The main determination of this paper is to trace the reasons for the endangerment of Romani and the Irish language in Europe and the real threat of the language extinction. Knowing the fact that both the languages are dying or almost dead in the era of 21st century and have been listed under “definitely” endangerment list by UNESCO and Endangered Language Alliance, it is utmost important to discuss the risk factors for the decline of language among its native linguistic community. The paper will also review the root origins of Romany and Irish as they both belong to Indo- European language and its genetic and historical relatedness. The following research article will also consider the need for language revitalization and re-awakening of language in context to language shift. On the other hand, it will frame the strategies and methods on how to revive the Romany and Irish language in educational institutions and socio-cultural organisation, encompassing the vitality of the language. The final part of the paper will sketch implementation of language planning, revitalisation methods, for loss and preservation of indigenous language.

**Keywords:** Language endangerment, The Irish language, The Romani language, Language revival, Language Death, Language shift, Language Preservation, Language Planning etc

### **1.1 a) Romani /Romany language**

The Romani language from the ethnological point of view states that the language belongs to the Indo – Aryan branch of the Indo-European family. He Romanian territories started from India in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and the spoken language has the same north Indian origin; the language is based on the “*Sanskrit language*”- *the ancient cult language of India*. The ethnic group traditionally originated in Northern India, however, in the modern time, they are principally living in Europe.

First, Romani did initially originate in India, and the language has its origins in Indo-Aryan. If Romani peoples did not leave India speaking one uniform language, they most likely mainly conversed by borrowing lexical and grammatical features from several Indic

Prakrit languages in addition to elements of Sanskrit. In the 18th century, it was shown by comparative studies that Romani belongs to the Indo-European language family.

According to the wiki, "*Romani - also Romany; Romani : (Romani čhib) is any of several languages of the Romani people belonging to the Indo-Aryan branch of the Indo-European language family. According to Ethnologue, seven varieties of Romani are divergent enough to be considered languages of their own. The largest of these are Vlax Romani (about 500,000 speakers), Balkan Romani around (600,000) speakers, and Sinte Romani about (300,000) speakers. According to Mendizabul et.al, "Across Europe, the Romani people have their genetic origins in North /north-western India. The wide genome data by 13 Romani groups discovered their connection to Indian population back to 1500 years"*.

*Many of the Romani words are similar to North Indian language, no doubt Romani may have forgotten their Indian origin identity, but the language is still binding them with their root culture. For example, "shard" means autumn in Romani and Sanskrit.*

At the end of the eighteenth century, linguistic comparisons of Romani with Indic Indo- European languages proved the Indian origin of the Roma. The first person to describe it was the enlightened Slovak intellectual Samuel Augustini ab Hortis in his work "Zigeuner in Ungarn (...)" (1775).

It has been assessed that approximately 70% of the basic vocabulary of Romani is related to other Indic (Indo-European) languages. Below are examples of two sentences.

- *mire bala kale hin (R.) / mere bal kale hain (Hindi)*
- *Me rañi, tu rañi, ko pherela pañi? (R.) / Mein ) rani, tu rani, kon bharega pani? (Hindi/Sanskrit)*

#### **b) Background on the Irish Language**

Irish, which is a Goidelic language of the Indo-European language, originated in Ireland is spoken widely by the Irish. The language has its root ties with the ancient classical language of India – Sanskrit. The Irish language probably originates more than 3000 years ago, when Celtic peoples from mainland Europe migrated to Britain and Ireland, merging with the people already there. From the 12th century, Middle Irish began to evolve into modern Irish in Ireland, into Scottish Gaelic in Scotland, and into the Manx language in the Isle of Man. Early Modern Irish, dating from the 13th century, was the basis of the literary language of both Ireland and Gaelic-speaking Scotland. According to Mathew Arnold, in his "*On the study of Celtic Literature*, "explained to his English – speaking audience, the Irish language indeed, belonged to the Indo - European family of language, because "the Irish word traith; the sea....supplies

Many scholars studied that the Irish language as we know too belongs to Indo

European language and has its root in the Sanskrit language. Old Irish, for instance, shares words with Sanskrit, the ancient classical language of India. Thus, in Sanskrit, *Arya* means 'freeman', and in Irish *aire* means 'nobleman'. Sanskrit *naib* means 'good', while Old Irish *noeib* means 'holy', becoming the modern *naomh* (pronounced neev) meaning 'saint'. Thus, the Irish language has roots stretching back at least 5,000 years and shares words with Sanskrit -the ancient classical language of India.

The Indo-European family has eight branches. Since both the language belongs to Indo European language , Romani and Irish belongs to Celtic groups. The Gaelic languages come from Old Irish and the other three Celtic languages come from British. There were other Celtic languages spoken on the European Mainland, but they died out around 1,500 years ago. The Celtic languages are believed to have come from Common Celtic, which came from Indo-European itself.

## STATUS OF LANGUAGE IN UNESCO LIST

UNESCO defines four levels of language endangerment, from the less endangered to the most endangered: vulnerable, definitely endangered, severely endangered and critically endangered. Once a language loses all of its native speakers, it becomes an extinct language.

While examining the status of Romani and the Irish language in Europe, it came to the fact that the circumstances are not good in view of the existence of language. *The Romani language - is an international language which is spoken by millions of people around the world. Despite the fact, Romani language is facing a serious threat in the European Union.*

According to UNESCO, Romani is stated as "definitely endangered" language. *In majority of European region , Albania, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Netherlands, Poland, Romania, United Kingdom, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, Serbia.*

On the other hand, The Finnish Romani language is listed as a seriously endangered language in the UNESCO Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger and there has been a real threat of the language's extinction.

UNESCO lists Irish as “endangered” in the Republic of Ireland, and technically “extinct” as a first language in Northern Ireland. Only around 72,000 speak the language daily outside of the education system; that's only about 4 per cent of the people who say they can speak Irish.

The 2016 census showed that inhabitants of the officially designated Gaeltacht regions of Ireland numbered 96,090 people: down from 96,628 in the 2011 census. Of these, 66.3% claimed to speak Irish, down from 68.5% in 2011; and only 21.4% or 20,586 people said they spoke Irish daily outside the education system.

Welsh is an official language in Wales and Irish is an official language of Ireland and of the European Union. Welsh is the only Celtic language not classified as endangered by UNESCO.

#### 1. What causes the Extinction of Romani and Irish Language in Europe?

- Language shift
- The European attitude towards Romani use of language
- Causes for the extinction of Romani in the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- Language Death
- On the Death of Irish language
- Causes for endangerment of Irish in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

##### a) What is a language shift?

Rendering to Wiki, “*Language shift, also known as language transfer or language replacement or language assimilation, is the process whereby a community of speakers of a language shifts to speaking a completely different language, usually over an extended period of time. Often, languages that are perceived to be higher status stabilise or spread at the expense of other languages that are perceived by their own speakers to be lower status. An example is a shift from Gaulish to Latin that occurred in what is now France during the time of the Roman Empire*”.

Another definition cited by Linguistic states that “*Language shift*” means the process, or the event, in which a population changes from using one language to another. As such, recognition of it depends on being able to see the prior and subsequent language as distinct; and therefore, the term excludes language change which can be seen as evolution, the transition from older to newer forms of the same language.

The loss of a language has been seen as a global issue that has swept the world and therefore a great deal of attention has been paid to it in the last few decades. Language loss has repeatedly occurred in all epochs (Dixon 1991, p.232 cited in Tsunoda 2006, p. 3). The loss of a language can be defined through two significant terms, namely language shift and language attrition. To be more explicit, language shift refers to the gradual replacement of one language by another as the main vehicle for communication in the whole community.

Language attrition refers to the loss of competence and fluency in the native language of individual speakers (Myers-Scotton 2002).

Several linguists point that language shift is a major indicator for the extinction of the language. These linguists say that such a shift is either voluntary or forced. However, we find that language shift has few factors that lead to replacing their traditional language with another language. For instance, in Slovakia, Roma children are exposed to use the official language of Slovak – as the language of instruction and being taught in the class.

## **2. b) The European attitude towards Romani use of language**

In the context of Indo-European Language, Romani is in the most complicated status in Europe. Despite the fact that Romani has a million speakers in Europe, it has been found that the language is facing immense negligence for having different Romani dialects and perhaps the reason for becoming dead.

In the major European countries such as United Kingdom, Sweden, Portugal, However, the language has been at a challenging stage due to language shift.

According to the report of Ministry of Education and Research, Romania, *“Most of the indigenous Gitanos (descendants of the immigrants of the 1500s) no longer speak Romani. They have developed a new language called Calo, in which the Romani lexicon is used in a Spanish grammatical framework. Some teaching materials and several dictionaries exist for this variety. Knowledge of Romani is limited to Gitano intellectuals and more recent*

*immigrant groups such as Kalderaš. There is also a Romani version of the Spanish Constitution, called Romano-Kalo, but this has more symbolic than communicative value.* ( Mihaela Zatreanu)

Similarly, in Sweden where we find speakers of Finnish Romani and Balkan Romani no longer speaker the same Romani. Though who are the descendants of Romani immigrants who called themselves Romani Manus, has a distinct language which combines Romani and Swedish.

In the UK, the descendants of Roma, the Romanichal no longer speak Romani and neither they are interested in the use of language in the educational institutes or as a teaching subject, or for the socio-cultural arena. The worst part is that there has been hardly any effort made to teach Romani to a new generation.

In Poland, the case is worse. The language has completely lost its identity and we can say that there are hardly any Roma speakers living there.

According to the report (2000), What is the Romani Language? by Bakker et al. (2000), “Romani speaking Roma Population amounts to 6.6 million out of which number of descendants no longer speak Romani. The largest number of Roma are found in European region like France, Greece, Germany, Italy.

*Compared to other European minority languages, the proportion of speakers among these groups is surprisingly high. In fact, a survey of the languages of school children in the southern part of the Netherlands showed that Romani, as spoken both by Roma and Sinti children, was the most vital of all languages studied, yielding a percentage of 99 % (Broeder & Extra 1998).*

The exceptions (i.e. figures lower than 50 %) are the Czech Republic, Hungary, Spain, Portugal, Finland and the United Kingdom. This loss is partly due to former policies of repression in some countries, and assimilation in others. Loss of the language, however, is independent of cultural loss. The Finnish Roma, for instance, remains a very distinctive group in Finnish society with strong cultural traditions. In some states, the number of speakers is low despite the presence of a sizeable Roma community (United Kingdom, Spain), since many of the descendants of the immigrants of the 16th century and earlier no longer speak Romani. They preserve a Romani ethnic identity, but they lost the language, in some cases already centuries ago. These groups did develop a new language, called Caló in Spain and Romani in Scandinavia and the UK. In some areas, these languages are losing ground to the state language.

*Romani is incontestably the most widespread non-territorial language in the world. It is sometimes treated as seven languages; Carpathian Romani, Kalo Finnish Romani, Baltic Romani, Balkan Romani, Sinte Romani, Welsh Romani and Vlach ('Vlax') Romani, but the Romani dialects preserve a remarkable degree of unity, which has led to the current treatment of Romani as a single language. Both Roma and Yiddish are included as endangered languages in the Atlas, and these languages receive little support from European or member state source. (Suominen, 2009)*

A number of reasons could be found for the death of the Romani language. It has been found that the attitude of European union towards the Romani language is negative; of which it has resulted that one of the most dynamic languages of Europe has now become one of the most vital minority languages in Europe. It has been observed that the Roma population cease to speak Romani due to having political, socio-economic dominance in their land. The transfer to the majority speaking group is not voluntary but the speaker themselves are abandoning their own language. Thus, the eventual attitude of Roma folks and the negative attitude of Europe moved into language shift and therefore lead to language endangerment.

### **c) Causes for the extinction of Romani in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

First of all, due to having low status in Europe, Romani is lacking the position of standard dialect against people. In contradiction, it is not preferred by the Roma individuals.



Secondly, the Romani didn't contribute towards the mainstream institution as a medium of instruction, unlike France, Greece, Netherland, Italy where in some universities Romani is still being taught at University level.

Thirdly, few groups in Europe constitute Roma as an ideal case of linguistic difference and suffers social marginalization like poverty and racism.

Fourth, due to lack of funding in policy-making organisation especially for defending Roma injustice, human rights of Roma children, educational reform in schools, the language has hardly any influence over contemporary Europe.

Fifth, Roma is a minority language in contemporary Europe which set a negative attitude towards the use of the language. For example, in Slovak schools, Roma students are scolded for using their mother tongue on speaking Romani and thus creating a stigma of being Roma in the schools. Finnish-speaking Swedish children were punished for speaking their home languages at recess, there is still official and informal pressure to use the language of instruction exclusively in schools. Such bigoted behaviour from the teachers itself is creating discrimination atmosphere.

### **Language Death and Death of the Irish Language**

By definition, Linguistics Zuckermann defines "language death occurs when a language loses its last native speaker, the term is called *linguicide* or *Language death*. In other words, *Language death* is a process in which it affects the native speaker, by the dominance of another language over the first language, resulting to language loss, I which proficiency of the first language is eroded. By extension, language extinction is when the language is no longer known, including by second-language speakers." Nevertheless, language death is a slow process of each generation in which spread of language from adults to children becomes difficult and restricted to acquire fluency in its mother tongue.

*"Language death is a process in which the level of a speech community's linguistic competence in their language variety decreases, eventually resulting in no native or fluent speakers of the variety. Language death can affect any language form, including dialects. Language death should not be confused with language attrition (also called language loss), which describes the loss of proficiency in the first language of an individual".* (Crystal, David, p.19)

#### **2.2 a) Death of the Irish language**

*Irish, is an autochthonous (indigenous) language spoken in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland. It is a Celtic language closely related to Scottish Gaelic and Manx and more distantly related to Welsh, Breton and Cornish. 'Celtic' or 'Proto-Celtic' is the*

*term linguists apply to the parent-language from which Irish and related languages evolved.*

*Although there is no exact date denoting when the first Celtic speaking tribes invaded Ireland or when Irish eventually overtook the then indigenous languages, it has been postulated that the process commenced around 500 B.C. (Ó Siadhail, 1989; Óh Uiginn, 2008).*

*Irish is recorded to be one of the oldest and most historic written languages in the world (Nettle and Romaine, 2000; Government of Ireland, 2010)*

In the book “The Death of Irish Language, by Reg Hindley, published in 1991 clearly mentions the very three reasons for the death of language. Firstly, he observed that the native speakers of the region (Ireland) Irish is learned as a first language or is learned simultaneously with the English as the first language, which is relatively low.

Secondly, he found that Irish which is spoken as a dominant language was much smaller than the official Gaeltacht region, and thirdly due to positive development outside of Gaeltacht region in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, heavily influenced people to switch over English and henceforth Irish didn't lead to sustainable future and began to erode way from the mainland.

It is impossible to say that why and when exactly the majority of Irish speaking people in eastern Ireland collectively decided about the utility of English over Irish, however, it happened between 1800 and 1850...{Hindley p.13}  
Maureen Wall quotes...

*"By 1800, Irish had ceased to be the language habitually spoken in the homes of all those who had already achieved success in the world, or who aspired to improve or even maintain their position politically, socially or economically. The pressures of six hundred years of foreign occupatio and more particularly the complicated political, religious and economic pressures of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had killed Irish at the top of the social scale and had already weakened its position among the entire population of the country."*

More recent research shows that even those children whose parents have made both a conscientious and a conscious decision to raise their children through the medium of Irish are struggling with the acquisition of Irish as a first language (*Péterváry et. al. 2014*) and that the best that can be hoped for, in the majority of cases, is that their parents concern with raising them through Irish will not damage their acquisition of English as a primary language. One might well ask at this stage, if it is morally tenable for the state to continue to encourage parents in Gaeltacht communities to raise their children through the medium of Irish, when the state itself is aware, or should be aware, that those children will not be able to acquire a native-speaker level of competence in their first language, given the



linguistic dynamics of the current Gaeltacht.

One of the reasons for the decline of the Irish was due to Great famine in which the population of Ireland fell dramatically from 8 million to half of it (4 million. ) Gaelic Irish, which is one of the widely spoken languages by a majority of Ireland population at the time of Great Famine. It is a Celtic language first identified around 400BC and then became written language only in the 6<sup>th</sup> century when the first manuscripts were written by Irish monks. Until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the language was orally transmitted in the form of Gaelic poetry inherited from Bardic tradition. However, in a few studies it was mentioned that the decline of the Irish language had started before the Great Famine , gradually giving the way to English.

By the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, English had replaced Irish as the language of education, and which made people difficult to have proficiency in Irish. According to Hindley, the teaching of English, through the hedge-system followed a trend among families to embrace English because it was to their advantage. (Hindley, p.40)

**According to Gearoid Denver**, he quotes

*[...] Although the hedge schools so beloved of the nationalist version of Irish history also functioned mainly through English, the state-established national school system was a strong, active agent in the colonization process and was a major factor in cultivating cultural assimilation and political loyalty. Still the first language of millions, Irish was from the outset prescribed in the schools either as a subject for study or more importantly as a medium of instruction.*

**William Wilde** did not hesitate to blame the Roman Catholic Church, not only for the decline of the language but more generally for the disappearance of old traditions and the global decline of Gaelic culture, which it had all but banned:

*"(...) all the stories about the fairies and the pishogues are going fast and will soon be lost to us and our heirs for ever. the old forms and customs too, are becoming obliterated; the festivals are unobserved, and the rustic festivities neglected or forgotten; the bowling, the cakes and the prinkums (the peasant balls and routs) do not often take place where starvation and pestilence stalk over the country." (Wilde, William, "Popular Irish Superstitions", p.544)*

#### **b) On the extinction of Irish in Europe in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

Initially, the first British Law enacted in Ireland which specifically banned the use of Irish and made it illegal for English colonists in Ireland to speak Irish and for native to speak their mother language when interacting with them.

Secondly, due to legal prohibition, according to **The Administration of Justice**

**(Language) Act (Ireland)** of 1737 “forbids the speaking of Irish within the courtroom, and the completion of legal documentation in Irish and imposes a financial penalty of £20 each time Irish is spoken in court”.

Thirdly due to linguistic attitude and the failure of Irish language in literature and in mainstream media in Europe, Irish was regarded as useless outside Ireland, not adaptable to modern and urban life, a very low prestige means of communication with a difficult grammar and pronunciation: overall, an insignificant number of books in Irish were printed before and after the Famine.

Fourth, whatever be the reasons why the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Ireland did not support the Irish language for most of the 19th century, Professor Máirtín Ó Murchú could write in retrospect:

*The dominance of English in the domain of religious practise attributable to the establishment of Maynooth College must have been the greatest single blow to the Irish language. There is ample evidence to show that the Catholic Church became a major force of de-ethnicization and Anglicisation.*

### **Contemporary Situation of Endangered Language in Europe**

A language is in danger when its speaker ceases to use it, in a number of communication domains, case to pass it from one generation to other, and thus there is the last speaker left for a native speaker, or no new speaker either adult or children. (UNESCO, 2003)

According to the Atlas of the World's Languages (UNESCO), there are 128 languages within the European Union that are considered to be endangered. All languages that are treated as a separate language, and not a dialect, have their own ISO- Code.

In an official report titled “**Endangered Language and Language Diversity**”, the paper cites the rich diversity of language that exists in Europe and the steps to safeguard their existence. The report states ....

- *Within the European Union, there are many languages spoken. There are 23 officially recognised languages which are the working languages of the Union. There are more than 60 indigenous regional and minority languages with five of these being recognised as being semi-official (Catalan, Galician, Basque, Scottish Gaelic, Welsh). All other languages have no official status in the EU.*
- *In 2001, at the end of the European Year of Languages, the European Parliament adopted a Resolution recommending measures to promote linguistic diversity and language learning. In July 2003, The European Commission adopted the Action Plan Promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity.*

- The European Council's Resolution of the 21 November 2008 on a European strategy for multilingualism notes that:

*'-linguistic and cultural diversity is part and parcel of the European identity; it is at once a shared heritage, a wealth, a challenge and an asset for Europe.' It also states that 'the promotion of less widely used European languages represents an important contribution to multilingualism; (Council Resolution of 21 Nov 2008 on a European Strategy for Multilingualism).*

- In 2011 the Committee of Regions noted in a Policy recommendation that there is a need for:

*'a specific policy on linguistic minorities that is adequately funded and underpinned by a firmer legal basis;'*

*Linguistic diversity and language learning have been significantly promoted in the context of multilingualism in Europe over the past decade. Regional and minority languages have also been promoted in this context.*

- One of the objectives of the European Union has been to preserve and promote the cultural and linguistic heritage which exists in Europe today.
- *'(The Union)... shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity and shall ensure that Europe's cultural heritage is safeguarded and enhanced' (Treaty of European Union, Article 3).*

In this context, the Council of Europe, through the Charter for Regional and Minority Languages and also the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities has also supported the promotion of minority language usage. UNESCO, on the international stage, has also developed a framework which determines the vitality of a language. This framework assists in the process of identifying those languages which are at greatest risk in order to assist in the process of policy developments, identification of needs and appropriate safeguarding measures.

## **2. Why retaining language diversity is important?**

Crystal (2000) suggests that there are five basic arguments about why retaining language diversity is important and why language planning is needed.

- It is widely agreed that retaining ecological diversity is essential. Uniformity can endanger a species by providing inflexibility and inadaptability. The range of cross-fertilization becomes less, it is argued, as languages and cultures die, and the testimony of human intellectual achievement is lessened. In the language of ecology, the strongest ecosystems are those that are the most diverse.
- Languages express identity. Identity concerns the shared characteristics of

members of a group. Community or religion identity helps provide the security and status of a shared existence

- Languages are repositories of history. Languages provide a link with the past, a means to reach an archive of knowledge, ideas and beliefs from our heritage.' Every language is a living museum, a monument to every culture it has been a vehicle to' (Nettle and Romaine, 2000)
- Languages contribute to our sum of human knowledge. Inside every language are a vision of the past, present and future. A language contains a way of thinking and being, acting and doing. Language is also at the heart of education, culture and identity.
- Languages are interesting in themselves Crystal argues that language itself is important. He argues that the more languages there are to study, the more our understanding of the beauty of language grows.

### **Methods of Language Revival and Preservation of Indigenous Language**

In a globalized culture, the endangerment and extinction of a language is a matter of grave concern. Numerous linguists estimate that half of the world's approx. 6,000 language is at risk of dying by the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Reports from UNESCO World's Atlas of Language, it is found that only a limited number of languages in the world is "safe", from the threat of extinction. On the contrast, language death stirs a stimulating effect on the present linguistic crisis, to which there is a major change of losing one's cultural identity. In such a scenario, it is quite necessary to adopt the methods of language revival to prevent the language of death and for the preservation of indigenous language. Henceforth, we have realized that there is a need for resuscitation of language which is at the edge of extinction, especially the most vulnerable language.

**David Crystal**, one of the eminent UK Linguist and author plots a few factors on how to strengthen the dying language from the threat of extinction. These six factors which will help in the progress of endangered language are :

1. increase their prestige within the dominant community
2. increase their wealth
3. increase their legitimate power in the eyes of the dominant community
4. have a strong presence in the education system
5. can write down the language
6. can make use of electronic technology

### **31.1 Language revitalization**

“Language revitalization, language revival or reversing language shift is the attempt by interested parties, including individuals, cultural or community groups, governments, or political authorities, to reverse the decline of a language.” (Wikipedia)

Language revitalization is an effective attempt to revive the extinct language or simply a procedure in which reversal of language shift takes place.

#### **4. On Revival of Indigenous Language**

One of the celebrated linguist Joshua Fishman, frame a model for reviving the Threatened language or extinct language.

Fishman's model for reviving threatened (or sleeping) languages, or for making them sustainable, consists of an eight-stage process. These eight stages are:

1. Acquisition of the language by adults, who in effect act as language apprentices (recommended where most of the remaining speakers of the language are elderly and socially isolated from other speakers of the language).
2. Create a socially integrated population of active speakers (or users) of the language (at this stage it is usually best to concentrate mainly on the spoken language rather than the written language).
3. In localities where there are a reasonable number of people habitually using the language, encourage the informal use of the language among people of all age groups and within families and bolster its daily use through the establishment of local neighbourhood institutions in which the language is encouraged, protected and (in certain contexts at least) used exclusively.
4. In areas where oral competence in the language has been achieved in all age groups, encourage literacy in the language, but in a way that does not depend upon assistance from (or goodwill of) the state education system.
5. Where the state permits it, and where numbers warrant, encourage the use of the language in compulsory state education.
6. Where the above stages have been achieved and consolidated, encourage the use of the language in the workplace.
7. Where the above stages have been achieved and consolidated, encourage the use of the language in local government services and mass media.
8. Where the above stages have been achieved and consolidated, encourage the use of the language in higher education, government, etc.

Additionally, Tasaku Tsunoda describes a range of different techniques to allow speakers to revitalize a language, including methods to revive extinct languages.

*He claims that the immersion method cannot be used to revitalize an extinct or moribund language. In contrast, the master-apprentice method of one-on-one transmission on*

*language proficiency can be used with moribund languages. Several other methods of revitalization, including those that rely on technology such as recordings or media, can be used for languages in any state of viability.* (Tsunoda, Tasaku. Language Endangerment and Language Revitalization, p.169) Thus, language revitalization is a development process to promote that endangered language which are about to die or are almost dead to let them have a sustainable future in the era of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

#### **a) On Revitalization of Romani in Europe**

1. There should be a change in education policy in Romani speaking territories, of which Romani needs to be added as a subject, to be taught in schools and universities and the Roma speakers are allowed to communicate in these academic institutions.
2. In the era of the digital world, social media would play a key role in reversing the language shift, the native speakers could use Romani for the purpose of communication and expressing their language culture. Media too have a noteworthy role in shaping the sustainable future of Romani or other indigenous language like offering T.V, Radio program and publication of Newspaper in the native language.
3. Organising more cultural, literature and musical fests in which promotion of Romani or other endangered language can be survived and henceforth will allow a newer generation to get interact and know about their own traditional language.
4. It is utmost important to lift the legal prohibitions and ban from the institutions in Europe in contemporary time, to have more space towards the use of language and helps in dissolving the discrimination of Romani in native lands like Sweden, Spain, Netherland, Germany United Kingdom, Slovak etc. Indigenous languages must be given official status by being declared the founding languages of this land.

*Over time, legislation has begun to accord some understanding and recognition of the value of the Romani language. In the 1990s, Finland took a historical decision which attracted international attention: in 1995, the Finnish constitution included recognition of the importance of and rights associated with the Romani language. The same provisions were included in section 17(3) of the new Constitution of 2000. This provision is regarded as a general constitutional safeguard for minorities, obliging the authorities to enable and support the development of the Romani language and culture.*

(<https://www.romanit.fi/in-english/the-romani-language/>)

5. Language Documentation is categorically needed to let the Romani, or other minority language flourish in which Linguists try to create language document with



features like grammar, dictionary, vocabulary addition for easy access to learn and gain fluency. This will promote Romani writers to collaborate with other educational experts leading to the creation of Romani -language teaching materials.

*In Bulgaria, the Ministry of Education has appointed a coordinator for Romani language curriculum, though the main challenge is currently to motivate teachers to initiate Romani classes in their individual schools, and to motivate parents to demand and to support such classes. In Macedonia, teachers in classes with an overwhelming Romani majority have reported often using Romani as a medium of casual communication in the classroom, while documentation on any formal consideration in the curriculum is still lacking.*

(<https://www.romanit.fi/in-english/the-romani-language/>)

#### **b) On Revival of Irish in Ireland and EU**

- Gaelic or Irish is the country's first official language .In 2005, Irish was made an official language of the European Union. The Irish language is the national and first official language of Ireland in accordance with article 8 of the Constitution of Ireland, the other official language being English.
- The Irish are now made a mandatory subject and introduced in primary, and at a higher level of education.
- The Irish Language: Culture and Identity

*All research assessments of the language attitudes of Irish people confirm that the Irish language enjoys immense goodwill as the enduring indicator of the unique, distinctive history and identity of Ireland and its people. (Ó Flatharta et al., 2009, p.3).*

- An Irish Revival Organisation, “the Gaelic League” (Conradh na Gaeilge) in the year 2018 marking 125 years of Irish celebration launched a programme called (Bliain na Gaeilge) on broadcasting on TV channel TG4, an effort to revive the Irish by focusing on Journalism, new literature and folk traditions. The main aim of the programme is to acknowledge, awaken the Irish across the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. *The programme aims to explore five themes: the revival of the language over the last 125 years; the creativity of the language; the vibrancy of the language; the participation of the community, and the value of the Gaeltachtaí (primarily Irish- speaking areas of Ireland).*

(<https://euroscopemag.eu/bliain-na-gaeilge-2018-how-ireland-is-attempting-to-revive-Its's-language/>)

Commenting on the 2018 Year of the Irish Language campaign, Professor of Modern Irish Language and Literature at University College Dublin Máire Ní Annracháin believes that

*while it's "a step in the right direction", it is "only one of a number of important steps that need to be taken."*

*Ever since the 18th century, use of Irish has been in decline, but ever since the formation of the Gaelic League (Conradh na Gaeilge) in 1893 and Irish independence in 1922, there has been a great effort put into reviving the language.*

*"This year's focus on native Irish speakers and the diaspora is welcome, but the provision of employment within the Irish language-speaking areas, support for Irish at home, proper provision of highly qualified teachers and public services through the Irish language all need reinforcement."*

(<https://eurosopemag.eu/bliain-na-gaeilge-2018-how-ireland-is-attempting-to-revive-Its-s-language/>)

- For the resuscitation of the Irish language in Ireland in 2010, the Irish government set a target of 2 million people with knowledge of Irish, and 250,000 daily Irish speakers by 2030.
- When the Irish literary tradition came under active existential threat from the seventeenth century onwards, the strategies of revival and renewal became part of an acquired self-awareness, an awareness that more dominant languages and literature do not acquire, simply because they can assume that there is no threat to their existence. Paradoxically, in the case of Irish and other minority languages and literature, existential uncertainty has engendered an awareness of their own agency. *"Rather than focusing on the perceived failure of state-led language revival we need to embrace the value of a tradition of revivalism".*( Fionntán de Brún, *Revivalism and Modern Irish Literature*)

*Irish has been an official language of the European Union since 2007, but it's currently under derogation within the institutions in Brussels, meaning that the EU is not legally obliged to provide drafts of acts in Irish unless a co-decision between the European Parliament and the European Council needs to be made. This derogation is expected to end by 2022.*

It is seen that reawakening of Irish language didn't happen in one day and various efforts from the government and community came into limelight. Yet it is quite hard to predict to what extent will Irish holds position in the European Union in upcoming years. Despite the limbo status of English in the EU, Irish is able to flourish and survive.

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*Paradoxically, in the case of Irish and other minority languages and literature, existential uncertainty has engendered an awareness of their own agency”.*

(<https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/books/hebrew-s-revival-has-lessons-for-the-irish-language-1.3827179>)

### **Language Immersion and Strategies for Indigenous Language Resuscitation**

*“Language immersion...is increasingly the pedagogy of choice among Indigenous communities seeking to produce a new generation of fluent Native speakers” (p.148). Long- time Indigenous language revitalization advocates Grenoble and Whaley (2006) also state*

*that “total-immersion programs are the best option for revitalizing a language” (p.51). However, it is reflected in the literature that total immersion is not always possible (at least initially) and that communities may have to have a graduated or partial-immersion approach (Aguilera & LeCompte, 2007).*

#### **1. Language engineering**

It is important to continually modernize Indigenous languages. It is especially important to incorporate contemporary expressions and concepts to capture young people’s attention and interest (Anthony, Davis, & Powell, 2003), without having to revert to English.

- 1. Language classes** This is probably the most common form of language teaching; however, it is not a method that generally creates fluent speakers (Blair et al., 2002). These initiatives involve teaching the language as a ‘subject’ in school for children or evening classes for adults (Ignace, 1998).

#### **2. K-12 immersion**

The achievement of immersion schools from kindergarten through to high-school graduation is no small feat. The Maoris and then the Hawaiians were the first Indigenous groups to accomplish this goal (Wilson & Kamana, 2001). Since 1997, the Maori have offered primary and secondary instruction exclusively in Maori (with the exception of ‘English’ as a subject) for ages 5 through 18 (Harrison & Papa, 2005).

- 1. Bilingual schooling** Several examples of completely bilingual, community-controlled schools exist, such as the well-known Rock Point Community School of the Navajo Nation in Northeast Arizona (Boseker, 2000) and the first bilingual Cree-English school which opened in Thompson, Manitoba in 2001 (Desjarlais, 2001). Bilingual schools are an important contribution to language revitalization strategies.

3. **Immersion practices** Cross-generational/community-based in many communities engage in summer immersion-style programs (Daniels-Fiss, 2005; Jacobs, 1998; Raloff, 1995), which are usually intensive, one- or two-week sessions that often have the advantage of learning outside the classroom for a daily-life experience of the language.

### **On Prevention of Language Death**

Anthropologist Akira Yamamoto has identified nine factors that he believes will help prevent language death :

- i. There must be a dominant culture that favours linguistic diversity.
- ii. The endangered community must possess an ethnic identity that is strong enough to encourage language preservation.
- iii. The creation and promotion of programs that educate students on the endangered language and culture.
- iv. The creation of school programs that are both bilingual and bicultural
- v. For native speakers to receive teacher training
- vi. The endangered speech community must be completely involved
- vii. There must be language materials created that are easy to use
- viii. The language must have written materials that encompass new and traditional content
- ix. The language must be used in new environments and the areas the language is used (both old and new) must be strengthened.

### **Conclusion**

To quote a Welsh proverb, “*A nation without a language is a nation without heart*” (Crystal 2002, p. 36). In this analysis, we came across that when and how the language dies and what caused the extinction of language in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Be it Romani or Irish both are as stated by **UNESCO World Atlas of Language “definitely endangered, endangered”** respectively.

When a language dies, a culture formed over the years too dies with it, for which we need to understand the serious of the language which is at threat of extinction in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Language is a myriad of culture; loss of Language is a loss of culture

The reasons could be cited as due to globalization where English has dominant power over employability, trends in education, career-making and business, more importantly, the media which supports the English as a feature making the language in every corner of the world.

However, one cannot fully blame the legacy of colonialism or modern trends for the

extinction of Irish or Romani or other endangered language. The Linguistic attitude towards the language also plays a substantial role in setting the sustainable level of an endangered language. Likewise, in Israel the most prominent language of the region, Hebrew which is the native language of the millions of people, once got extinct is now revived comparing to Latin or Romani. Unquestionably resuscitation of endangered language is not possible overnight, however if folks and government together frame strategies to revive the language and create awareness to make supreme use of native language rather than simply setting trends for the English language any over language.

In conclusion, we find strong similarities between the endangerment of Irish and Romani in Europe, in context to another indigenous language. Due to legal prohibitions, change in the medium of instructions, lesser scope in academics and career are few to set the causes for the decline of indigenous languages and a major cause for language extinction. Interestingly, the attitude towards the language has a consequent effect on its native speaker and that barring them to leave their own language, by consuming 'English' as a global language and henceforth this needs to be changed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Undoubtedly, the folks can bring back their own language regardless of modern age risk factors, if they thrive again to make survive their mother tongue and come up with responsibilities towards achieving back their own heritage of language -which is an epitome of culture and traditions. Because "when a language dies, a whole civilisation dies", hence it is worth to fight for linguist diversity.

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